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SUBJECT: MBEKI WANTS PRESIDENT BUSH TO KNOW HE IS TRYING ON
ZIMBABWE

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b.d)

¶1. (C) On the margins of the April 16 High Level Meeting of the UN Security Council on Africa (reported septel), South African (SAG) President Thabo Mbeki pulled aside Ambassador Khalilzad and asked him to convey a message to President Bush. Mbeki said he was concerned the President might think South Africa was not doing enough on the situation in Zimbabwe following the March 29 elections. Mbeki wanted the President to know that he was doing everything he could. Mbeki claimed that the problem now was with officials at the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission, not Mugabe. They were looking at recent events in Kenya and believed that the premature release of election data fueled the crisis there -- something they very much wanted to avoid. That said, Mbeki insisted that he would not allow the elections to be stolen.

¶2. (U) UN Secretary General Ban opened the Security Council session earlier in the day with a strong statement on Zimbabwe. He expressed deep concern by the prolonged non-release of the election results in Zimbabwe, and said the international community "continues to watch and wait for decisive action from Zimbabwean authorities and the countries in the region." The U.S., the UK, France, Belgium, Croatia, Italy and Senegal also commented on Zimbabwe in their statements. The focus of the day-long Security Council session, chaired by President Mbeki, was strengthening the relationship between the UN and the African Union.
Khalilzad